

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01042 181016Z

17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

IO-11 OPIC-03 ARA-06 AF-06 DHA-02 ORM-02 /090 W

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P R 180935Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6041

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1042

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO

SUBJ: POSSIBLE GOP RECOGNITION OF MPLA

REF: (A) STATE 38097, (B) LISBON 1027

1. HAD ANOTHER DISCUSSION LATE LAST NIGHT WITH MARIO SOARES ON ANGOLAN RECOGNITION. TOLD HIM FRENCH RECOGNITION, WHICH WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE FOLLOWED BY OTHERS, HAD OBVIOUSLY OVERTAKEN OUR INITIATIVE. SOARES HAD LIKED IDEA OF COMMON EUROPEAN POSITION AND SAID HE THOUGHT FRENCH HAD MADE SERIOUS ERROR.

2. SOARES SAID HIS PARTY WAS EVENLY DIVIDED ON RECOGNITION ISSUE. EARLY IN THE DAY PARTY SECRETARIAT HAD DEBATED EXTENSIVELY. THOSE FAVORING CONTINUATION OF PRESENT PS POLICY, INCLUDING SOARES, HAD FINALLY DOMINATED. SOARES POINTED OUT THAT MPLA HAD EXERTED MAXIMUM PRESSURE ON GOP TO RECOGNIZE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A EUROPEAN BREAK-THROUGH. NOW THAT FRENCH HAD RECONGIZED AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD FOLLOW HE EXPECTED PRESSURE ON GOP FOR RECOGNITION TO EASE. PRESIDENT HAD SEEMED MORE RELAXED ON SUBJECT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. THIS IS CONSISTENT
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PAGE 02 LISBON 01042 181016Z

WITH STATEMENT TO ME BY ANTUNES EARLIER IN THE DAY THAT

FRENCH RECOGNITION MADE IT LESS URGENT FOR GOP TO
RECOGNIZE.

3. THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR THE SPLIT IN THE PS ON
RECOGNITION OF COURSE, IS THE REFUGEE VOTE. YESTERDAY'S
WELL PUBLICIZED TRIP TO LUANDA OF ROSA COUTINHO (REFTEL B)
IS CERTAIN TO PROVOKE REFUGEE RESENTMENT, AND RECOGNITION
COULD SPARK DEMONSTRATIONS. ALTHOUGH PRESS CONTINUES TO
SPECULATE ON IMMINENT RECOGNITION, THERE COULD STILL BE
SOME DELAY WHILE GOP ALLOWS REFUGEE TENSIONS TO EASE,
PARTICULARLY IF FRENCH RECOGNITION HAS INDEED LESSENER
MPLA PRESSURES ON GOP.
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